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THE  
CASE  
OF

JOHN DUNTON,

Citizen of London :

With respect to his Mother-in-Law,  
Madam Jane Nicholas,  
Of St. ALBANS;

And her Only Child,  
Sarah Dunton.

With the Just Reasons for her Husband's Leaving her.  
*In a Letter to his Worthy Friend, Mr. George Larkin, Senior.*

*To which is Added,*  
His Letter to His WIFE.

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*Psalm X. 3. The Wicked — blesteth the COVETOUS, whom the Lord abhorreth.*  
*Ecclesiast. V. 13, 14. There is a SORE EVIL which I have seen under the Sun, namely,*  
*Riches kept by the Owners thereof to their hurt : But those Riches perish by evil Travel.*  
*Luke XII. 15. Take heed and beware of COVETOUSNESS.*

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MLM



# The CASE of

## John Dunton Citizen of London :

In a Letter to Mr. George Larkin, Senior.

*My very good Friend,*

I Receiv'd your obliging Letter, which I had answer'd much sooner, had I not been prevented by a *Second Fit of Sickness*, which I was in hopes would have been my last; and as it had brought me even to the Door of Death, would have also let me into Eternity; and thereby have prevented me from disclosing what I cou'd wish might remain Buried (as it has done hitherto) in Eternal Silence. — But since the good Providence of GOD has thought fit to bring me back from the Grave, I thought my self oblig'd to return you an Answer to your Letter. I cannot blame you for wondering at my *Long Absence from my own House*, which methinks even to Me appears so strange, that had I not those *Reasons* for it that I have hitherto conceal'd from all the World (*and which I am sure are Justifiable in the sight of GOD and Man*) I shou'd not know how to answer it to my self. — But your kind Advice to me, *To hasten my Return Home*, (which I look upon as an Effect of our *Old Friendship*) has at last prevail'd with me to disclose to you what I always resolv'd to have lock'd up in the silent Closet of my own grieved and afflicted Heart. You will not wonder at what I have already writ, when I shall tell you, I must unavoidably reflect upon the great Unkindness of my *Honoured Mother-in-Law* and my *Dear Wife*, of whose Reputation both in *England* and *Ireland*, your Self are a Witness how very tender I have been: And I had some hopes that *what Praises I gave 'em in the Dublin-Scuffle*, would have Engag'd 'em Both to have been as kind as I there Represent 'em. But I was mistaken, for they were not to be flatter'd into Kindness.

But tho' my Praises were all lost, yet I still hop'd (*for a Drowning Man will catch at any thing*) that

the Essay I writ on *knowing our Friends in Heaven*, (being more Satyrical) wou'd have made 'em Generous; and the rather (for so I was told) as my Reverend Neighbour came on purpose to desire 'em not to starve themselves, but rather as they had a *Plentiful Fortune*, to make some use on't: And I think this was good Advice, for who'd starve himself to enrich his Heir? ('Tis no Abuse to the good Creatures of God, moderately to enjoy them.)

Sir, You may remember I gave you one of these Essays in *Ireland*, but I told you nothing of what I design'd by it: Here in *Dark Hints*, that no body can understand but themselves (that so I might preserve their Reputation, and shew 'em their Error at the same time) is a History of the *Furious Treatment* (a) (or *Honey-Moon*, it being so soon after our Marriage) that I receiv'd from 'em, from the *Second Day I was Marry'd*, to the time I Embark'd for *Ireland*. And had you seen in what manner they began their *Reign* (which was too Arbitrary to last any long time) you'd think me very obliging to condescend to a Reconciliation.

But seeing none cou'd understand that Essay but themselves, I do intend (if they tie up my Hands from doing Justice, or Print any false Stories) to write a Narrative of this Match, from the time *Madam Nicholas* (my *Pious Mother-in-Law*)

invited me by Letter (b) to court her Daughter, to the time their *Raving Carriage* frighted me to *Ireland*; in which shall be inserted the *Messages* that were sent upon that occasion, and the *PRIVATE LETTERS* that afterwards past between the *Mother* and the *Daughter*, with

(a) This is own'd in two Letters sent to me in Ireland, and which I'll Print if I see Occasion.

(b) A Copy of which I'll Print if they Answer this.

with a *Diary* of their *Quarrels* at my House, which was now chang'd from a *Family of Love*, to a *meer Billingsgate*. And this attested by *TWO PERSONS* that then liv'd in my Family. And (my Friend) did you but know (as all that came to my House observ'd) in what a *Hell* I liv'd, for the *Four First Months* after I was Marry'd, you'd rather Incourage, than Disswade me, from Writing of this *Narrative*.

For, Mr. Larkin, I tell it you as a *Secret*, (tho' I shou'd and will be *Master of my own House*) their *Furious and Covetous Treatment* has frighted away all my Friends from the *Raven*, except Two, that come out of *Curiosity* to see 'em, that they may more sensibly lament my Case; which you will think doleful, when I tell you, That I am so very

*UXORIOUS*, (as appears by my living with my First (c) Wife, 15 years, without bearing or giving one Angry Word) that had Mother or Daughter but One *Obliging Quality*, I cou'd yet doat upon 'em.

But so it is, my Friend, (my Two Sickneses this year hindring me in the disposing of my *Remaining Sick*) things are now come to that *Upshot*, that I must lay my self under the Imputation of a very *Unkind Husband*, or else make it appear that my Wife and Mother are very *Unkind to Me*. And yet to *Expose* those for whom I have so *Tender a Love*, tho' it be only to your self (in whose Breast I am satisfied I may lock up these *Secrets* without fear of *Discovery*) is that which I know not how to do, without a very great *Reluctancy*: And yet without my Wife and Mother will be willing to *Accommodate* things better than at present I have any grounds to hope, what I now only impart to your self, I am afraid I must ere long be forc'd to declare to the whole World in my *Just Vindication*.

But that I may leave you no longer in the dark, as to the Cause of my *Present Retirement*—You must know, my Friend, That my being Bound for my First Wife's Sister's Husband, and Five hundred Pounds loss at Sea, in a Ship that was Cast away; some hundred Pounds Loss in Printing a large Folio, two thick Volumes of the *Edits of Nants*,—and the long and chargeable Sicknes of my First Wife, together with the Charges of her Funeral (for I thought it my Duty to shew a great deal of Love to a Wife that despis'd the World, when it stood in Competition with my Esteem) had run me considerably into Debt; which notwithstanding by my own Punctual Payments, and the Prudent Silence of my first Wife, in altogether concealing my taking up Money upon my own Estate, was wholly hid from the World;

so that my Reputation receiv'd no Diminution—Upon this, when I was to be married to my present Wife, I nakedly told my Mother-in-Law that I was 1300 l. in Debt by these fore-mentioned Losses, (for I had no reason to conceal 'em, having gain'd very considerably in Trade till these happen'd) I also told her that with my Wife's Portion I design'd to clear my own Estate, which I also did, and Joyntur'd my Wife therein.

Sir, The Fortune that my Mother offer'd me down, was a *Thousand Pounds*; but besides that, I insisted on 500 l. more, to pay off my other Debts, and to carry on my Trade: And who cou'd have thought but I shou'd have obtain'd it, my Wife being the only Child of her Mother? But having, as I said, clear'd my Own Estate, (which is worth 2000 l. besides the Two *Reversions*, which in time may be 1800 l. added to it) and Joyntur'd my Wife therein, I drew up the State of my Case, with respect to my other Debts, and presented it to my Mother, who (to my great amazement) was so far from Answering my desires, that she refus'd so much as to read the Paper I drew up; which was a thing so very Unkind (I was about to say *Barbarous*) that had a *Turk* presented me his Case, I wou'd have Read it, tho' I had never Answer'd it.

When my hopes were thus frustrated with respect to my Mother, I then told the matter to my Wife, and desir'd her to tell her Mother of the Necessity I was under of having 300 l. which she did; but at the same time said, *She'd Starve before she'd part with her Joynture*, which yet I never ask'd her to do.—And can you think now I have not Reason to absent my self from my Home, since I can't go thither with Safety?

You write me word indeed, That my Wife speaks of me with very much *Tenderness and Affection*; which I am very apt to believe, for she tells me in her last Letter, *Let Business succeed as it please, she does not value that, so that she cou'd but see me at home*; and in the next line adds, *I'm mightily concern'd for your Illness, which is the same with mine; for you and I are one*. But whilst she expresses Unkindness in her Actions, and refuses to do what lies in her Power to make me Easie, her words are but like those of whom St. James speaks, *Jam. 2. 16.* who said, *Be ye warmed and filled, but gave them nothing that was needful*. For the Expressing of much Love, and shewing None, does but aggravate the Unkindness. Her Love to me therefore, notwithstanding all these Tender Expressions, is very questionable; but both her and my Mothers Love to Money is very apparent, in which they are so Tender, that they won't part with it upon any Terms; and had rather I shou'd lie in a Goal for not paying my just Debts, than supply me with so much as will do it. And what can be more Ridiculous, than her being so desirous

my Coming Home, and Continuing there, when She's the only Occasion of my Absence? For I do assure you, Mr. Larkin, whatever my Mother and my Wife may make you believe, That if my Mother will let me take up 300 l. upon my Own Estate; or (which will be a greater Kindness, and sooner done) lend me 200 l. and be bound her self for 300 l. more, that so I may pay my Debts and be made Easie, (which is all I ever desir'd) I will both immediately come Home, and also continue there, and Absent my self no more. But at present Cohabitation is no ways proper; for I have such an Abhorrence of anything that looks Unjust, tho' 'twere but in the least Trifle, that I think 'tis a Great Sin (if I am mistaken, I ask Pardon) for any Man so much as to Try for an Heir that might probably Dispossess any one of a Just Debt, tho' 'twere but of Two Farthings—But being Ambitious to be a Father, if either my Mother or Wife will contribute to my being so upon Honourable Terms, I will believe and say as much of the Reality of their Kindness, as I now do to the contrary; and will esteem such a Reconciliation the happiest day I ever yet met withal. But if they will rather chuse to expose my Reputation (which I have kept hitherto Unblemish'd) than to comply with those Reasonable Terms I have mention'd, it is evident their Hearts and their Tongues don't go together: For the World knows well enough that my Mother has a FAIR ESTATE, and that my Wife is her only Child; and to whom upon our Marriage she promis'd to leave it; which Promise was made as a Motive to make Me consent to the Match: And since upon that Promise I marry'd her Daughter, and Joyntur'd her in a clear Estate of 2000 l. besides the Reversions; that she shou'd now suffer my Reputation to be slur'd (as 'tis like to be) for want of 300 l. is what I believe your Self cou'd never have thought, had it not been told you.

But I know well enough they have their OBJECTIONS, with which they satisfy themselves, and I shou'd not deal fairly by them (as I always have, and always will do) should I not inform you what they are.

They will say, That if they shou'd do this, there will be no end of it; for I shall quickly run my self as far in Debt again by Printing (being what I so much delight in.) But to obviate this, I answer, That I desire but 300 l. in all, of which I shall use 375 to clear the Bonds, and what I owe in Trade, and then there will be a well furnish'd House, a clear Stock, a good Estate in Land, and 125 l. in Money to Trade withal; and that I may not be tempted to exceed those Bounds, I have resolv'd never to exceed 50 l. at once either in Printers or Stationers Debts. And if by Trading I shall happen to run that out, I will give over Trading, and live on what I have; which

in Conjunction with my MOTHER'S PROMISE, [d] is [d] As I shall prove more by 6000 l. than ever we by the Letter that are likely to spend, having was sent to me by her neither Child nor Chick. Order.

They may also object, That tho' I have Joyntur'd my Wife in my Estate, yet I still keep the Writings in my own hand, and will not let them have them. To this I Answer, 'Tis true, I do so; but the Reason is, Because whilst I see they have no regard either to my Ease or Reputation, by enabling me to pay my just Debts, I can't look upon 'em as my Friends, and upon that account have kept my Writings from 'em [and they are now in the hands of an Eminent Citizen.] But if they will Answer my Expectation, with respect to the Particulars above mention'd, I will, if my Mother desires it, put all my Writings into her hands, which at once rakes off that Objection. Perhaps they'll also say,

That I have receiv'd Money from Ireland, for my Venture thither, that might have paid my Debts without their help. To this I Answer, The several Debts I contracted for Paper and Printing since my second Marriage—The Moneys which I paid that I took up upon Bond, to furnish out my Venture for Ireland; The Charges I was at in Ireland, for the King's Customs, Binders, Printers, five Servants, and the Sale, was about 440 l. The great quantity of Money I lost in Ireland, through the Dishonesty of some I trusted; The great Losses I have had in several Books I have Printed since my Return for England; The Sums I have paid for New Copies, of which Sir William Temple's Letters is one, and the Whole Duty of Man in Verse, is another, &c.

My Dear Friend, These several Payments and Disappointments, together with the vast Charges I have been at, in defraying Two Fits of Sickness this Summer [for had I neglected my self, I had perish'd, my Wife nor Mother never sending once to know if I wanted any thing in my Two Sicknesses] have ingross'd all the Moneys I receiv'd in Ireland, except a small Sum remaining for my present Support; and I can't see, as I told my Wife, why these Disappointments shou'd Diminish her Love, for they Increase mine.—However, 'Twas by Reason of these Disappointments, that I never paid off the Bonds I had told 'em of, nor gave 'em any Account of my Irish Venture: For seeing my Mother and Wife so unkindly refus'd to Assist me, (chusing rather to venture my Life on the Irish Seas, tho' I was but newly Marry'd) I thought they shew'd a very Selfish Temper, so Industiously to enquire about what I had receiv'd, but no ways to concern themselves about what I wanted: And, which adds to their Unkindness, (if they don't permit me to do Justice) I had several Proposals made of a Thousand Pounds [with-



making of any Joynture] which were all rejected for the sake of my Present Wife.

Shou'd I have any Debates with 'em upon this Subject, it wou'd run us into New Quarrels, and therefore I Resolve [for my own Quiet] to forget all their Provocations; and sure I am, Ill Husbandry [for Loss in Trade can't be so Accounted] can be no excuse for their being Unkind; perhaps a Drunken Swearing Husband might have frighted 'em to a Compliance; but I do averr, I was never disorder'd with Drinking in my whole Life; and Challenge all the Servants that have liv'd with me, to prove one single instance to the contrary: — Nay, Mr. Larkin, I appeal even to you, whether ever you saw any thing in all the time that you have been acquainted with me [which is 20 years] that look'd like Extravagance? Nay, I'm sure, you have rather thought me too Covetous, but it was because you knew not where the Shoo pinch'd me; and had I not met with these Disappointments in Trade, I intended not to have troubled them: And yet why shou'd this be thought such a Trouble? You know I was bound for a Thousand Pound for my first Wive's Sisters Husband [at my Wife's desire] and forc'd to pay a great part of it, and yet never lov'd my Wife the worse, nor once upbraided her with it, as she declar'd upon her Death-Bed.

My Wife and Mother have now such an Opportunity to oblige me as may never fall out again; but I desire they'd remember that the 300 l. I am asking for, is not Money Given, but only Lent Me, and that upon my Own Estate, in which my Wife, [a very sickly Woman] has no further Interest than her bare Life: But tho my Dear has no more than her Life in my Estate, yet her free and generous granting my present Request, will be so gratefully taken by me, that I shall make it the-Business of my whole Life to study to Requite it. — I say, Provided it be done Freely, and without Reflections. There is indeed a way of doing Kindnesses that takes away the Kindness of the thing done; but when I see a Kindness is done Kindly, there's nothing can oblige me more. — Nor will the Kindness be more to me than to my DEAR SPOUSE; for, a Wife shines by her Husband's Honour, but must be darkened if he suffer an Eclipse. — If she believed this, she'd be forward to grant my Request; but whether she does or no, I look upon it an indispensable Duty to pay my Just Debts, and can't die with a good Conscience till it be done; and wou'd no more have put my self out of a Capacity of doing it, than I wou'd have *Eaten Fire*, had I not thought I shou'd have had that Money from my Mother which would have enabled me to do it. And do you Judge whether I had not Reason to think so, for when her Attorney, whom I mentioned before, ask'd her before our Marriage

to lend me 300 l. she did not say she wou'd not, which made him tell me, he did not doubt but she wou'd lend it. I say, looking upon the Payment of my just Debts, as I do, to be an Indispensible Duty, if both my Wife and Mother refuse to assist me in it, I must Endeavour to raise it from my Estate by Cutting down the Timber, there being several Acres of Wood upon it, which being sold, I doubt not will raise me a considerable Sum. 'Tis true, I am very loth to do this, because it will disgrace the Estate; but seeing they first expose my Reputation, why shou'd I be solicitous about it? And I have no ways left to help my self, but either this, or else the Selling the Reversion of it after my Wives Life: And for my self, I am no ways solicitous; for, I'd rather Beg, than not pay my Debts.

This, and our Living from each other, will be the unhappy Consequences of their Refusing to assist me: When on the contrary, shou'd they comply with my Desires, we might live happily together, and the Estate kept Free and Undisfigured. Besides, if Providence shou'd take me hence before her, I shou'd think I cou'd not do better than to leave all to her, who was willing to part with all to serve me, and make me Easie.

But if they do not agree to these Terms, instead of Marrying a Wife of a Fortune, [as many a man has done, whose Estate is not worth so many Pence as mine is worth Hundreds] I have fairly married my own Ruine, and must have the Scandal of Owning (I won't say Breaking for) 300 l. tho my own Estate with the Reversions, is worth ten times more, besides her MOTHERS PROMISE of giving me *Sampsil*, (which is a Noble Estate it self) and the several hundreds she Dyed Possess'd of, which I am so far from desiring, that wou'd she but make me easie, there's not a Person in the World wou'd more heartily desire her Life than my self. But the Whole Duty of Man tells us, that *A Promise is a Debt*, and I thought I might depend upon it, (and therefore refus'd a Note she offer'd to secure *Sampsil* to me and my Wife, in Case she Marry'd her self) when made to influence such a Solemn thing, as a Marriage. Neither do I doubt, at her Death, the Performance of the Marriage Promise, tho she shou'd think good, to make me a Vagabond in the mean time.

But though at present I labour under the Misfortune of being forc'd to ask a Favour at their hands [I word it so, for were it in my Power, and I saw them so pinch'd as I am, I shou'd voluntarily propose doing that which I am forc'd to intreat for, and perhaps in vain.] Yet my Comfort is, the Printing of this Letter will let the World (and my Few Creditors) see that I wou'd be Honest, if my Mother, or Wife either, had so much Love for me as to lend me; and therefore all the Injuries others suffer by

me, will lie at their Doors; which will be a greater Clog upon their Consciences than they'll be able to bear; and therefore I hope they'll consider that Coverousness [especially in a Husband or Wife] is a more provoking Sin than is generally thought; for how often have SMITHFIELD-BARGAINS been made, to add Land to Land, not Love to Love; and to unite Houses to Houses, not Hearts to Hearts; which hath been the Occasion that Men have turn'd Monsters, and Women Devils.

Thus have I fairly represented my Whole Case, with respect to my Honoured Mother and my Dear Wife. I shall not need to desire you to keep it private, having told it as a Secret [unless you shall think it proper to shew it to my Wife and Mother] for I would not it should be made Publick whilst there remains any hopes of an Accommodation; and therefore to question your Faithfulness herein, wou'd look like a Reflection upon you; or rather upon my self, in communicating a Secret of this Importance to one that I thought couldn't keep it. But I have no such thoughts, only having been thus free with you, let me beg your Advice herein.——I cannot think but with Extream Trouble, of doing any thing that may Expose my Dear Wife and Mother, whom [upon their Compliance with my just Desires] I cou'd Embrace in the Arms of a Sincere and Unfeigned Affection, and bury all that has hitherto look'd like Unkindness, in the Grave of Eternal Oblivion. But since Self-Preservation is the Great Fundamental Principle and Law of Nature, if they refuse to comply with me herein, and go about through their inordinate Love of Money, to Banish me from my own Home, and Expose my Reputa-

tion to the World; I shall then be under a Necessity of Exposing them to the World in their proper Colours, being furnish'd [as I hinted before] with Materials for that Purpose, but they shall never be Publish'd, if I can but meet with that Compliance from my Wife, which both the Law of God and Man has made her Duty.

These things, I think to lay before my Wife and her Mother, but wou'd willingly have your Thoughts about it first, which I shall very much depend upon, as being one whom I always found my Faithful Friend: Pray be not long in sending me your Best Advice, for at present my Mind is very much disorder'd, and the Disorder of my Mind, has twice this Summer, like to have prov'd fatal to my Body. I am glad to hear your good Wife is come safe to London, and shall be gladder to see her there, when my Circumstance will permit me. I have only to add, That my very Bowels Yearn towards my Dear Wife, and if you can direct me how to manage things, so as my Desires, with Respect to the Payment of Debts, may be Answer'd, and a good Agreement with Her and her Mother Effect'd, whereby we may live in that Unity, Love and Concord, which might make us happy both here and hereafter, you will Eternally Oblige

Your Truly Loving Friend,

Decem. 3. 1699

John Dunton.

### Reflections upon the Carriage of my Wife and Mother, after they had seen the Fore-going LETTER.

**T**He foregoing Letter I writ to Mr. Larkin, in Answer to one of his to me, who after he had read it [unknown to me] went with it to my Wife and Mother; who both refus'd to Comply with my just Desires, either of Suffering me to take up 500 l. upon my own Estate, or to lend me such a Sum out of her own heap; tho besides shewing my Letter, he us'd several Pathetical Arguments to incite them to it, but all in Vain. On the 9th Instant coming to London, I sent for Mr. Larkin, who acquainted me, That [hoping to serve me thereby] he had shew'd my Letter to my Mother and Wife, and that they had heard it through, but without any success; which he admired at, seeing,

as he express'd it, There were Arguments enough in it, if not to melt a Stone, yet at least to carry a Cause where a Wife, that was continually saying, She had been Miserable had she Married any Man but Dunton, [a] was the sole Judge. [a] As several And certainly unless they have sear'd that heard Consciences, which I am apt to fear, her can testify, by their unnatural Carriage, and something I conceal till I am further Provok'd, they'll one day think it their Duty to Answer my Reasonable Request, and to move for a Reconciliation: And to encourage 'em to it, I here declare (tho they have had no regard to my Reputation) I am yet ready to forgive 'em, tho I find it the hardest Task o-

myf

(60)

my Life; For by reason of their Covetousness, they have Banish'd me from a House that I thought a Paradise; and what has cost me several Hundred Pounds, will now be sold for a Trifle. Then let the World Judge, considering what Fair Offers I made 'em, whether I had not reason to be Mourn'd; especially since my Wife told me at parting, She'd Burn rather than Assist me.

Yet for all this Matchless Provocation, when ever my Wife casts a Longing Look towards her Husband, and asks Pardon for Loving the World more than him, I shall leap to see the returning Prodigal, and run to meet her with open Arms.

And if I may hope for this Reconciliation from the Consideration of their Covetous Tempers, I have all the Reason in the World to expect it; for I shall next prove they were fully satisfied with my Estate. And this is Evident by the Letter sent to my Mother-in-Law, by her own Attorney, which is this following—viz.

Madam,

I Received Yours, and am now to tell You, I cou'd not have an Answer from Chelham, till last Monday; but now I have an Account of Mr. Dunton's Estate, according to his own Particulars. Which is all at present from

Your Servant,

J. R.

### A Word to those Gentlemen to whom I'm Engag'd.

I shall next in a particular manner address my self to those Gentlemen to whom I'm Oblig'd, and upon whose Patience (by reason of a Covetous Mother and Unkind Wife) I am forc'd to Trespass a little, which, Next to the Unkindness of my Wife, is the only thing in the World that Troubles me.—I have ever had a great Aversion to be in Debt, in small as well as in greater matters; and for that reason have often paid a Debt twice over, for fear I had not paid it once; but that which I so much dreaded, is now come upon me; For tho I respect my Wife and Mother as much, or, were it possible, more than they love the World, yet you see, Gentlemen, by my Letter to Mr. Larkin, that their Careless before Marriage are all forgot, and that the Tears of a Husband have no Rhetorick in 'em, where Money is the thing desir'd.

'Tis true, they have a FAIR ESTATE, but ha'n't the Soul to do good with it either to themselves or others. But 'tis no more than what Solomon tells

So much for my Estate in Land.—As to my Stock, she said she did not so much concern her self about that, as my Land; and indeed I don't know why she shou'd; for my Land (which her Friend declares was what I related) was a sufficient Joynture for her Thousand Pound. However, as I had satisfy'd her about my Land, so I was willing to give her the best Account I cou'd of my Stock; and accordingly I told her my Copies and Books I had Printed, had cost me 2000 l. and if I added Three, 'twas no more than was True, (I having Printed many Hundred Books) But tho my Stock was thus Bulky, as is sufficiently seen by my Irish Venture, and the remaining Stock which I left behind, yet wicah I told her I cou'd not say, if my Stock was forc'd to be Sold, that it wou'd yield me 400 l. for in such Cases (as was seen in the Fate of my Remaining Stock) Books sell little more than for waste Paper. However, That part of my Stock I sent to Dublin, yielded 400 l. and a great deal more, as Mr. Larkin knows, that was present at the Sale: So that my Land was as much, and my Stock better, than I represented is.—But I can't help Losses and Disappointments in Trade, and wou'd be easie under them; For not being able to Govern Events, I Endeavour to Govern my self.—Neither dare I rail at Providence, as they do, who abuse their Friends for not being Successful.

us, Eccles. 5. 13, 14. There is (says he) a sure Evil which I have seen under the Sun, namely, Riches kept for the Owners thereof to their hurt.—But those Riches perish by Evil Travel.

For my own part, I can truly say, I have found more Pleasure in dividing a small Fortune with my Friends, than in Hoarding up, or Enjoying the greatest Treasures without them. The greatest Benefit that we can receive from Riches, is, their inability us in our LIFE TIME to do more good than those that have less; and therefore as I never waited for DEAD-MENS-

SHOES, (f) so I hope mine are as little desir'd; which did the Miser consider, he'd grow more Generous than he is now. Sneakings, or at least so kind as not to starve himself, I can't

say my Wife or Mother have starv'd themselves, (for I found 'em alive when I came home) and



and to do 'em Justice, *They Never Fight*; but 'tis evident by my Mothers denying my small Request, that *she loves nothing but her Money*: Her **FIRST SON-IN-LAW** (a Person of Great Worth) found her of this Temper (*So his Great Disappointment*) and I could say something of HER CARRIAGE TO HER HUSBAND, &c. But here's enough to convince the World (more especially my Neighbours in *Jewen-street*) how falsely she represented my *Last Farewel*; and her Barbarous Treatment appears in nothing so much, as in her *aggravating those Hairs* at parting, of which (as I can prove by several Witnesses) *She and her Daughter were the Sole Occasion*. It could not satisfy e'm to be the Cause of my Ruine, (for it's not plain, when they could so easily Prevent it, and would not?) but they must afterwards murder my Reputation. This is such a Barbarous thing for a Wife to be guilty of, that I never heard any thing like it. And it appears yet the more unkind, as I'm told yesterday of a young Lady that (of her own accord) sold her Jewels, Watch, Rings, (instead of Raving that her Husband had got 'em) to pay off his just Debts. But tho I have nothing to boast of, of this kind, yet my comfort is, ALL I owe in the World, is now brought into the Narrow Compass of 250 l. For being obliged in Conscience to secure to a near Relation 150 l. (as 'twas the greatest part of her Maintenance) I have by the said Security paid all I owe, to the Sum of 250 l. and that's owing to Persons that are so far from blaming what I've done, that they are amaz'd (as every body was that knew 'em) how I could live with 'em so long. Three of these Persons have sent me word that they are so well satisfied of my Honest Intentions, that they'll never Touch a Hair of my Head; and I don't doubt but I shall meet with the like Compassion from all the rest. 'Tis not long since I told a Person, that sued to me for Pity, that I'd Sign his Liberty with as many Hands (if I had 'em) as I have Hairs on my Head. Gent, I don't doubt but my Readiness to Serve others in their Distress, has been the occasion of that Generous Treatment I receive from you. However I do assure you, that the good Opinion you have of me, shall not be lost; for that I may do you Justice, I am willing to sell even my Self (to the very Skin) to Pay you: 'Tis true, the Sum is so very Little, I owe now, that I'm ashamed to think that my Wife and Mother shou'd have such a Mean Spirit as to suffer me to be Expos'd for it: But Gentlemen, I ever thought there was as much Justice in a Penny as a Pound; and shall be so scrupulous to pay every one to a half Farthing, with the Interest Money, (and Interest upon Interest, if demanded) But am under a necessity to entreat your Patience till next Christmas, having two Barns to build, and such unavoidable Repairs, as will devour all my Rent, but

what is necessary for my own Support; but at Christmas (in the year 1700,) I'll clear all the Interest that shall then be due; and if Gods Providence does not work my Deliverance before that, (for if I Dye before that time, I've Will'd that the Reversions shall be Sold as soon as ever I am Buried, to pay my Debts; or if my Wife shou'd Dye, I can take up 1000 l. in a Weeks Time) I'll then set upon Selling my Woods to a single Twigg, and I don't doubt but they'll pay the 250 l. or if they don't, by the Lady-Day, after, I'll Sell the Reversions of my whole Estate, or else Beg from Door to door, till such time that the Income of my Estate, by Equal Divisions, has paid my Debts; but, Gentlemen, I do believe I'm the only Instance in this Age, that has starv'd in the midst of Plenty. Sure no Man will be so unkind as to question the Sincerity of these Promises; for tho I can't do more than I here promise, yet what I promise, you may depend upon. Neither can any think I had any Dishonourable Design in making a Joynsure of my Estate; for I shou'd have been more Fool than Knave, had I marry'd with a design to be ruin'd for 300 l. when my bare word (Before I fell into Misers Hands) would have paid'd for 1000 l.

Thus, Gentlemen, have I laid before you my Whole Case. And seeing my Ruine is, of the two, a more Melancholy thing, than the Delay of your Monneys for a few Months, I hope you'll send me word (g) (for, (g) In a Letter 'tis all that's left to comfort me) directed for me, to That you are fully satisfy'd with M. Kenfwell's House what I've promis'd. in Little - East-cheap.

And as to my Wife, tho she has turn'd me over to the mercy of Strangers (which, without Repen'ance, will bring a Curse upon her whole Estate) yet I still have a Tenderness for her, and think it my Duty, tho her Mother be worth Thousands, to take a most Particular Care that she want for nothing; and in order to it, I told her Mother, before Mr. Larkin and several Others, That I'd pay her for her Board in the Country, as she had paid me in the City, which was Four Shillings a Week for Meat, Drink, Washing, and Lodging; and I further told her, when I was settled, which I hope will be by next Midsummer, that I'd send for her. And tho she has said before Mr. Larkin and others, She'd not come; yet I'll try her again, and I give this Publick Notice of it, that she may have no Pretence to be out of the way, but may leave word with Mr. Blackstone in Bull-Head-Court in Jewen-street, where I may send to her; for seeing she might have liv'd with me in Splendor and Reputation, and would not, I shall prove it her Duty to live with me in Adversity: Or if she refuses to come to me, I shall Print such an Advertisement as Mr. Godfrey Lee did in the Flying Post, about his Wive's Elopement.

Gentlemen, I did all I cou'd to prevent things coming to this Extremity : And therefore, tho my Wife and Mother had return'd a very Provoking Answer to that Letter I sent Mr. Larkin, yet being resolved to try my Wife's Kindness a little further, I writ the following Letter to her ; and because

Mr. Larkin was only (as yet) acquainted with our Affairs, and shew'd my Wife the Letter I sent to him, I desir'd him to give himself the trouble of being the Bearer of this also ; To which he readily consented.

## My Letter to my WIFE.

MY DEAR!

**I** Came to Town last Night, and sent for my Friend Mr. Larkin about Ten at Night ; who told me he had been with you and my Mother, and had shew'd you my Letter to him, wherein I gave him a true state of my Case ; and tho' it was what I did not design he shou'd have done, yet having done it, he has thereby sav'd me the Labour, and can justifie to the World, That my Mother has Refus'd to lend me any Assistance to Enable me to be honest, or to make me Easie ; and that she Values me, and you so little, that rather than let me take up 400 l. upon my Own Estate, or lend me so much of hers, (she will suffer my Reputation, and yours too (for to use your own Words, You and I are One) to be Exposed to the World ; which when once done, is a Damage she'll scarce be able to repair : However I can Justifie my self in all that I have done ; and resolve to be as honest as I can, till I can be so honest as I wou'd : In order to which I will Print my CASE with all convenient speed, and let the World see that all those Allegations under which she wou'd cover her self, are but like so many Cobwebs, which the Beesom of Truth will quickly sweep away : And I am sorry that in this Unkindness of my Mother, you shou'd take part with her against me, that is, against your self ; For a Husband ought to be nearer and dearer than a Mother ; and had you esteem'd me so, and dealt as such by me, I had had no need to trouble my Mother : As to what you make your Excuse, That then your Mother would have given you nothing, if you can believe she wou'd have been so UNNATURAL, yet it can be no Excuse, except such a one as the Apostle Condemns, which is a doing Evil that Good may come of it.

Then, Prethee, my Dear, Let my Mother All as she pleases, let not thee and I ( who are both extraordinary Crazy, and can live but a few Years ) make such a poor use of the World as to Hugg and Embrace it. Besides, if you don't Consent to the making me easie, how can I think your Love is what you pretend ? Your shewing so much Love to the World, is neither pleasing to God nor Man ; and consider (for you pretend to Religion) how 'twill rejoyce our Enemies, to see us Quarrel with our very Blessings, and to make even Happiness it self to Disappoint us. — You know, my Dear, Ma-

dam C — y Sold her Estate un-ask'd, to oblige her Spouse ; and indeed the Design of Joyntures is to defend against bad Husbands, and not to Ruin those that are kind, and wou'd be honest, if their Wives wou'd let 'em. I knew a Wife that wou'd often say, What does a Joynture signifie to a Woman that loves her Husband ? When Man and Wife love so little, that the one is unconcerned in the others Afflictions, there generally follows a Blast upon all they undertake.

My Dear, All our Distresses of Body and Mind shou'd be so Equally Divided, [b] that all yours shou'd be mine, and all [h] As I have large- mine shou'd be yours : Mr. Roch- ly proved in my ford Marry'd us for better for worse, for Richer for Poorer ; Essay on knowing our Friends in Heaven. and [as you well observe] We are One Flesh ; and therefore shou'd be no more offended with the Words, or Failings and Wants of each other, than we wou'd be had they been our own. For my own share, I solemnly declare, Were you seiz'd with a Fit of Sickness that requir'd the Advice of the whole Colledge of Physicians, and all the Physick in the Apothecaries Shops, I'd sell my Estate to procure it. And why shou'd you doubt it ? For did I not spend near 100 l. [tho I had but a thousand with you] in what related to my Courtship, and your coming home ? So that I can't imagine what your Mother means by the mighty Presents she talks of ; For I don't think all that she ever gave us [besides the Thousand Pound] ever amounted to Ten Pounds : For as to the 40 l. she paid for your Admittance to my Copyhold-Land, 'twas no Service to me, as I then told her, but Money purely slung in the dirt ; for I was Admitted before I knew her. So that I had but a Thousand Pound, tho she boasts of more ; and that Thousand is a dear Purchase, if my Ruine must pay for't.

All that I shall add, is, That you must not blame me for what Methods I shall take : For 'twill look very Ridiculous for you [or your Mother either] to blame me for that which you can prevent, but won't. And whatever you may think of the matter, I can't see that my Love to you will acquit me from being Just to those to whom I am Indebted.

*I have thought fit to send these Lines by Mr. Larkin, as well to persuade you to what is both your Duty and Interest, as to acquaint you that I will be with you my self by and by, to make the Last Offers; that so, if possible, Things may be Accommodated before it be too late: For if my Reputation be once Publickly Expos'd, it will be to no purpose to talk of Terms. Which is all, till I see you, from him who resolves [in spite of all your Unkindness] to continue*

Your most Affectionate Husband till Death,

Dec. 10.

1699.

JOHN DUNTON.

## The CONCLUSION.

**M**Y Letters meeting with no Success, either from Mother or Daughter, I was then resolv'd to go my self, which accordingly I did: For tho my Letters were sent in vain, yet I did not know but by going in PERSON I might move Compassion, if not in my Mother, yet at least in my Wife, who in several Letters had so passionately desir'd to see me; yet still my Fears were more than my Hopes; for I knew how their Hearts were GLU'D to the World, and therefore cou'd not expect to see much Affection, or that Tenderness which ought to be between a Man and his Wife: So that methought I went to my own House (whither, some years ago, I went with such Pleasure and Delight, as being sure to be receiv'd with a thousand Welcomes) just like a man going to his Execution; and so it accordingly happen'd, for when I came to my House, whither I was accompany'd by several Friends, which render'd my Farwel the more dismal) I found both Mother and Daughter in the same Mind Mr. Larkin had done before; my Mother declaring to those Persons then present, *That she wou'd be pull'd Limb from Limb, before she wou'd lend a Farthing, or suffer me to take up a Penny upon my Estate;* my Wife at the same time declaring, *SHE WOU'D BE BURND BEFORE SHE'D LET ME;* which I confess put me into a Great Passion, for I am but Flesh and Blood, and tho I can bear long, can't bear always: So that now, for about Five Hours (which I cou'd ne'er say before, since my Second Marriage) I was Sole Master of my own House.

Having staid with 'em about five Hours, and heard a great deal of Raving, I was so sick on't, that I cou'd stay no longer: So I took my leave (for that Night) in the following words:

*After, 'Tis now but a few hours before my Reputation will be Sturt'd; which seeing neither you nor my*

*My Wife upon reading of this Letter, shew'd her self as inexorable as her Mother, telling Mr. Larkin [as she did me afterwards] That her Mother made her swear, before she was Married, that she wou'd never suffer her Husband to take up a Penny upon her Furniture, in case of the greatest Necessity; and threatening that if she did, she wou'd never leave her a Farthing of what she had.*

*Wife will prevent, I have only to add, I pray God bless you Both; and so (with thanking you for my Ruine) bid you Farwel; not doubting but the GOD of my Life, who knows the Sincerity of my Heart, and Designs, to pay my Debts, and in all things to keep a Conscience void of offence towards GOD and Man, will notwithstanding all your Unkindness, inable me to accomplish what I so earnestly desire.*

After uttering these Words, to shew I was in Charity with them, I Saluted 'em both, and gave 'em a Second Farwel; and at parting I told my Mother the Story of Midas, who (as the Poets feign) starv'd in the midst of Plenty: And so Mother (said I) *do you deal with me.* And with those words, I took leave of both Wife and Mother; and then bid Farwel to the Black Raven, the most Pleasant House that I ever dwelt in.

I know some that can creep for Interest, will blame me for Publishing This CASE; Say they, *Who wou'd lose such a Fair Estate as the Mannor of Sampsil, for want of a little Submission?*

To this I answer, A Man may bear till his heart break; and having us'd all the gentle Methods I cou'd think of, to no purpose, the Publishing of This Case is the only way I have left to Reform 'em. Besides, I think it my Duty to prefer a Quiet Life, and the doing of Justice, to the Fine Mannor of Sampsil; for I can be happy without Sampsil, but I shou'd never be so, shou'd I prove dishonest. — But say I had a Mind to Sampsil, I'm sure to Publish this Case, is the only way to insure it; for when my Mother reads it, (wherein I have conceal'd abundance of things relating to her) she'll find that Sampsil, and her Useless Heaps, won't be able to repair that Damage I now suffer by her Matchless Cruelty. — Besides, I've prov'd already, that A PROMISE IS A DEBT, and she having



having receiv'd me *Sampl*, in a *Glenn* manner, I can't see how she shou'd dye with a *Safe* Confidence, *knowing* me of it. So that I have no fear of being *on* *Sampl*, (and for the *Benefit* of *St. Albans*, they were given to my Wife after her *Barbers* Death) who knows the way with as much reason make bold with a *Quaint* to *Pretext* paying a due Debt, to my Person that does not honour or please her, as not perform an *Absolute* Promise; and Conscience must needs tell them so that make it. To every *Reluctance*, after a *Promise* is past, to bring in *Conditions* I might be *Endless* upon this Subject; but, as *Cowley* says, I am almost choak'd with the *Super-abundance* of the matter: Too much *Plenty* impoverishes me, as it does them. So that I have the same Reasons, or greater, to expect *Sampl*, as ever I had. And therefore whoever blames me for Publishing of This Case, I shan't think 'em my Friends.

I shall only add, There's not a Line in this CASE but what I'll prove, and assert with my *Last Breath*;

and therefore if my *Adversaries* think good to reply to it, they can't do it in a better time; for they have *Sampl* and *Sampl* and *Sampl*, and where I *Stand*, I have nothing left to do but to Answer them; but let me have the *DIFFICULTY* in the World, I must expect that even of a *Narrow* Soul will be raising of Lyes, and that my *Enemies* will triumph over me. But I bless GOD, *My Husband* having had no hand in my Ruine, I am not under such Treatment; for the *Sun* that Sets, will Rise again; as it is done; I have some *Friends* that have Souls Brave enough to know a Friend in Adversity. However, I shall now have an opportunity to know who my Friends are, which while the World Smil'd, I cou'd never discern. Or suppose the Worst, I can Write away my *Melancholy Hours*; and seeing 'tis far better to give some account of Time [doe to little Purpose] than none at all, I shall now enter upon Writing The Art of Living and Dying Incognito. And there, I End.

### To the Reverend Mr. Blackstone in Bull-Head-Court in Jewen-street.

Dear Sir,

THE Obedience of Your Temper, and your being a Peace-Maker, not only by your Office, as a Minister, but by your Natural Inclination; which, together with the good Opinion my Wife and Mother (as well as every body else) has of you, has prevail'd with me to desire that Favour of you, as to send it be possible to bring 'em to a Sense of their Duty, and to a Compliance with my Reasonable Demands: In order to which, I wou'd desire you to read my Case to 'em, which I have here sent you in Print, and which will be Publish'd to Morrow. But if upon hearing it, they are willing to grant my Request, I do hereby declare to you, That upon such an Assurance, I will yet Suppress this Paper, tho Printed, and will Burn the Impression. For even Matrimonial Quarrels, provided they are heartily Forgotten, make the *Married Couple* but love better: The Falling out of Lovers (and such Married Folks are, or should be) is not only the Renewer but Increaser of Love. Or if any angry Words shou'd hereafter arise, I'm for following your Advice, to let 'em no more take Air, than Fire in a Collar. I'd not have 'em told so much as to be a *Master*,

but let the Pillow alone decide 'em. And if we are yet be happy, 'tis my Advice (to my Self, as well as to my Wife) That we're never Angry together. For if only one is Angry, 'tis the Easier to Agree. However, in This Case, I desire we may both learn the Art of Memory, and the greater Art of Forgetfulness, and we shall not fail of being Happy still; that is, Remember all the kind things, Forget all that's harsh or ungrateful; at least never Repeat 'em, which will be the best way to Forget 'em.

But if they still continue Obdurate to all Advances I have made towards a Comfortable Living with my Dear Wife, I am satisfy'd that I have done my Duty, and that the Fault will lie at their Doors. And this Letter to your self will be a further Testimony against 'em. Which in all, at present, from, Reverend Sir,

Your most Obliged

Dec. 20

1699

Humble Servant,

John Denton

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